PART II

During Scarcity and Famine

CHAPTER III.—Declaration of Scarcity or Famine and Commencement of Relief

30. *Declaration of scarcity and famine.*—It shall be for Government to decide after consideration of the reports of the Collector and the Commissioner whether a district has passed the stage of observation and to declare when scarcity or famine conditions exist in a district.

When distress is not so severe as to necessitate the opening of famine relief works, but some relief is required in the form of local fund or municipal aided works, expansion of public works, or village works, and gratuitous relief, or of gratuitous relief alone on a considerable scale, Government may declare the existence of scarcity. When distress is acute, and work has to be provided for large numbers of people, and gratuitous relief given on an extensive scale, Government may declare the existence of famine.

In cases in which gratuitous relief on a small scale is likely to be necessary for some time and a formal declaration of scarcity or famine appears inappropriate, relief shall be granted under section 20 of the Code.

31. *Appointment of a Famine Commissioner.*—Whenever a serious famine appears imminent or extensive relief measures are undertaken, a Famine Commissioner may be appointed to the chief executive control of famine administration throughout the Presidency.

32. *Meaning of the word Commissioner.*—Throughout parts II and III of this Code the word "Commissioner" shall, unless a contrary intention appears evident from the context, be taken to mean the Divisional Commissioner.

33. *Measures to be adopted by the Collector on the declaration of scarcity.*—When scarcity conditions have been declared to exist in a district, the steps to be taken by the Collector shall ordinarily be—

(*a*) to commence the distribution of village gratuitous relief;

(*b*) to open scarcity works where necessary after satisfying himself that the migration of able-bodied workers to centres where labour is required has reached its limit and that local works are required for those who for valid reasons cannot migrate in search of labour, or by reason of their backwardness or caste prejudices are not accustomed to do so, and that the opening of works will not in any way deter people from migrating.

The Collector shall have power to take these steps, reporting his action by telegram to the Commissioner.

34. *Measures to be adopted on the declaration of famine.*—When famine conditions have been declared to exist in a district, the Collector may take steps—

(*a*) to convert those scarcity works, the numbers of workers on which exceed 3,000, into famine relief works;

(*b*) to open such further famine relief works as may be found to be necessary.

After the declaration of famine, the existing scarcity works on which there are not more than 3,000 workers, and such new works as will not afford labour for more than 3,000 workers and can more suitably and conveniently be conducted as scarcity works, should continue to be conducted in accordance with the rules relating to scarcity works, *vide* sections 54 to 79.

35. *Administration and selection for gratuitous relief.*—For the purposes of the distribution of gratuitous relief the system of village inspection may, if considered necessary, be developed in the manner described in section 48. Care shall be taken to see that all persons eligible under section 147 are brought on the gratuitous relief registers at an early stage. The registers shall be very carefully checked and the attention of supervising officers shall be directed to the necessity for training Circle Inspectors at this stage in the correct practice of selection for, and distribution of, gratuitous relief.